The TATLER.

By *Iſaac Bickerſtaff* Eſq;

Quicquid agunt Homines noſtri Farrago Libelli.

From *Thurſday May* 12. to *Saturday May* 14. 1709.

From my own Apartment, May 12.

I Have taken a Reſolution hereafter, on any Emergency of Want of Intelligence, to carry my Familiar abroad with me, who has promis'd to give me very proper and juſt Notices of Perſons and Things, to make up the Hiſtory of the paſſing Day. He is wonderfully skilful in the Knowledge of Men and Manners, which has made me more than ordinarily curious to know how he came to that Perfection, and I communicated to him that Doubt. Mr. *Pacolet*, ſaid I, I am mightily ſurpriz'd to ſee you ſo good a Judge of our Nature and Circumſtances, ſince you are a meer Spirit, and have no Knowledge of the Bodily Part of us. He anſwer'd, ſmiling, You are miſtaken, I have been one of you, and liv'd a Month amongſt you, which gives me an exact Senſe of your Condition. You are to know, That all who enter into Human Life, have a certain Date or *Stamen* given to their Being, which they only who die of Age may be ſaid to have arriv'd at; but it is order'd ſometimes by Fate, that ſuch as die Infants, are after Death to attend Mankind, to the End of that *Stamen* of Being in themſelves, which was broke off by Sickneſs or any other Diſaſter. Theſe are proper Guardians to Men, as being ſenſible of the Infirmity of their State. You are Philoſopher enough to know, that the Difference of Men's Underſtanding proceeds only from the various Diſpoſitions of their Organs; ſo that he who dies at a Month old, is in the next Life as knowing (tho' more innocent) as they who live to Fifty; and after Death, they have a perfect Memory and Judgment of all that paſs'd in their Life-time, as I have of all the Revolutions in that uneaſie, turbulent Condition of yours; and, you'd ſay, I had enough of it in a Month, were I to tell you all my Misfortunes. A Life of a Month, ſaid I, can't have, one would think, much Variety; but pray let us have your Story.

It was one of the moſt wealthy Families in *Great Britain* into which I was born, and it was a very great Happineſs to me that it ſo happen'd, otherwiſe, I had ſtill, in all Probability, been living: But I ſhall recount to you all the Occurrences of my ſhort and miſerable Exiſtence juſt as they appear'd to me at that Time. The Firſt Thing that ever ſtruck my Senſes, was a Noiſe over my Head of one ſhrieking; after which, methought I took a full Jump, and found my ſelf in the Hands of a Sorcereſs, who ſeem'd to have long watch'd, as being employ'd in ſome Incantation: I was throughly frighten'd, and cried out, but ſhe immediately ſeem'd to go on in ſome Magical Operation, and anointed me from Head to Foot. What they meant, I could not imagine; for there gather'd a great Crowd about me, crying, *An Heir, an Heir*; upon which I grew a little ſtill, and believ'd this was a Ceremony to be us'd only to great Perſons, and ſuch as made them, what they call'd, *Heirs*. I lay very quiet; but the Witch, for no Manner of Reaſon or Provocation in the World, takes me and binds my Head as hard as poſſibly ſhe could, then ties up both my Legs, and then makes me ſwallow down an horrid Mixture; and I thought it an harſh Entrance into Life to begin with taking Phyſick; but I was forc'd to it, or elſe muſt have taken down a great Inſtrument in which ſhe gave it me. When I was thus dreſs'd, I was carried to a Bed-Side, where a fine young Lady (my Mother I wot) had like to have hugg'd me to Death. From her, they fac'd me about, and there was a Thing with quite another Look from all the reſt of the Room, to whom they talk'd about my Noſe. He ſeem'd wonderfully pleas'd to ſee me; but I knew ſince, my Noſe belong'd to another Family. That into which I was born, is one of the moſt numerous amongſt you; therefore Crowds of Relations came every Day to congratulate my Arrival; among others, my Couſin *Betty*, the greateſt Ramp in Nature: She whisks me ſuch an Height over her Head, that I cry'd out for Fear of falling. She pinch'd me, and call'd me Squealing Chit, and threw me into a Girl's Arms that was taken in to tend me. The Girl was very proud of the Womanly Employment of a Nurſe, and took upon her to ſtrip me, and dreſs me a-new, becauſe I made a Noiſe, to ſee what ail'd me: She did ſo, and ſtuck a Pin in every Joint about me. I ſtill cry'd: Upon which, ſhe lays me on my Face in her Lap; and to quiet me, fell a nailing in all the Pins, by clapping me on the Back, and ſkreaming, a Lullaby. But my Pain made me exalt my Voice above hers, which brought up the Nurſe, (the Witch I firſt ſaw) and my Grandmother. The Girl is turn'd down Stairs, and I ſtrip'd again, as well to find what hurt me, as to ſatisfy my Grannam's further Curioſity. This good old Woman's Viſit was the Cauſe of all my Troubles. You are to underſtand, that I was hitherto bred to Hand, and any Body that ſtood next gave me Pap, if I did but open my Lips; inſomuch, that I was grown ſo cunning, as to pretend my ſelf aſleep when I was not, to prevent my being cramm'd. But my Grandmother began a loud Lecture upon the Idleneſs of the Wives of this Age, who, for Fear of their Shape, forbear ſuckling their own Offſpring; and Ten Nurſes were immediately ſent for; one was whiſper'd to have a wanton Eye, and would ſoon ſpoil her Milk; the other was in a Conſumption; the other had an ill Voice, and would frighten me, inſtead of lulling me to ſleep. Such Exceptions were made againſt all but one Country Milch-Wench, to whom I was committed, and put to the Breaſt. This careleſs Jade was eternally ramping with the Footmen, and downright ſtarved me; inſomuch that I daily pin'd away, and ſhould never have been reliev'd, had it not been, that on the Thirtieth Day of my Life, a Fellow of the *Royal Society*, who had writ upon *Cold Baths*, came to viſit me, and ſolemnly proteſted, I was utterly loſt for want of that Method: Upon which he ſous'd me Head and Ears into a Pail of Water,

where

where I had the good Fortune to be drown'd, and ſo eſcap'd being laſh'd into a Linguiſt 'till Sixteen, running after Wenches 'till Twenty five, and being married to an illnatur'd Wife 'till Sixty: Which had been my Fate, had not the Inchantment between Body and Soul been broke by this Philoſopher. Thus, 'till the Age I ſhould have otherwiſe liv'd, I am oblig'd to watch the Steps of Men; and if you pleaſe, ſhall accompany you in your preſent Walks, and get you Intelligence from the Aerial Lacquey, who is in waiting, what are the Thoughts and Purpoſes of any whom you enquire for. I accepted his kind Offer, and immediately took him with me in an Hack to *White*'s.

White's *Chocolate-houſe*, *May* 13.

We got in hither, and my Companion threw a Powder round me, which made me as inviſible as himſelf, which had alſo ſuch an Effect upon the Eyes and Ears of the Crowd about us, that we could ſee and hear all others, our ſelves unſeen and unheard.

The Firſt Thing we took Notice of, was a Nobleman, of a goodly and frank Aſpect, with his generous Birth and Temper viſible in it, playing at Cards with a Creature of a black and horrid Countenance, wherein were plainly delineated the Arts of his Mind, Couſenage and Falſhood. They were marking their Game with Counters, on which we could ſee Inſcriptions, imperceptible to any but us. My Lord had ſcor'd with Pieces of Ivory, on which were writ, *Good Fame*, *Glory*, *Riches*, *Honour*, *and Poſterity*. The Spectre over againſt him had the Inſcriptions of, *Diſhonour*, *Impudence*, *Poverty*, *Ignorance*, *and Want of Shame*. Bleſs me! ſaid I; Sure my Lord does not ſee what he plays for! As well as I do, ſays *Pacolet*. He deſpiſes that Fellow he plays with, and ſcorns himſelf for making him his Companion; and yet, at the very Inſtant he was ſpeaking, I ſaw the Fellow who play'd with my Lord, hide Two Cards in the Roll of his Stocking: *Pacolet* immediately ſtole 'em from thence; upon which the Nobleman ſoon after won the Game. The little Triumph he appear'd in, when he got ſuch a trifling Stock of ready Money, tho' he had ventur'd ſo great Sums with Indifference, increas'd my Admiration. But *Pacolet* began to talk to me. Mr. *Iſaac*, This to you looks wonderful, but not at all to us higher Beings: That Noble has as many good Qualities as any Man of his Order, and ſeems to have no Faults but what, as I may ſay, are Excreſcencies from Virtues: He is Generous to a Prodigality, more Affable than is conſiſtent with his Quality, and Couragious to a Raſhneſs. Yet, after all this, the Sourſe of all his Conduct is (tho' he would hate himſelf if he knew it) meer Avarice. The Ready Caſh laid before the Gameſter's Counters makes him venture, as you ſee, and lay Diſtinction againſt Infamy, Abundance againſt Want; in a Word, all that's deſirable againſt all that's to be avoided. However, ſaid I, be ſure you diſappoint the Sharpers to Night, and ſteal from 'em all the Cards they hide. *Pacolet* obey'd me, and my Lord went Home with their whole Bank in his Pocket.

Will's *Coffee-houſe*, *May* 13.

To Night was acted a Second Time a Comedy call'd, *The Buſie Body*: This Play is written by a a Lady. In old Times, we us'd to ſit upon a Play here after it was acted; but now the Entertainment is turn'd another Way; not but there are conſiderable Men appear in all Ages, who, for ſome eminent Quality or Invention, deſerve the Eſteem and Thanks of the Publick. Such a Benefactor is a Gentleman of this Houſe, who is obſerv'd by the Surgeons with much Envy; for he has invented an Engine for the Prevention of Harms by Love-Adventures, and has, by great Care and Application, made it an Immodeſty to name his Name. This Act of Self-denial has gain'd this worthy Member of the Commonwealth a great Reputation. Some Lawgivers have departed from their Abodes for ever, and commanded the Obſervation of their Laws till their Return; others have us'd other Artifices to fly the Applauſe of their Merit; but this Perſon ſhuns Glory with greater Addreſs, and has, by giving his Engine his own Name, made it obſcene to ſpeak of him more. However, he is rank'd among, and receiv'd by the modern Wits, as a great Promoter of Gallantry and Pleaſure. But I fear, Pleaſure is leſs underſtood in this Age, which ſo much pretends to it, than in any ſince the Creation. 'Twas admirably ſaid of him who firſt took Notice, That (*Res eſt ſevera Voluptas*), There is a certain Severity in Pleaſure. Without that, all Decency is baniſh'd; and if Reaſon is not to be preſent at our greateſt Satisfactions, of all the Races of Creatures the Human is the moſt miſerable. It was not ſo of old; when *Virgil* deſcribes a Wit, he always means a Virtuous Man; and all his Sentiments of Men of Genius are ſuch as ſhow Perſons diſtinguiſh'd from the common Level of Mankind; ſuch as plac'd Happineſs in the Contempt of low Fears, and mean Gratifications: Fears, which we are ſubject to with the Vulgar; and Pleaſures, which we have in common with Beaſts. With theſe illuſtrious Perſonages, the Wiſeſt Man was the Greateſt Wit; and none was thought worthy of that Character, unleſs he anſwer'd this excellent Deſcription of the Poet:

Qui --- Metus omnes & inexorabile Fatum
Subjecit Pedibus, ſtrepitumq; Acherontis *avari*.

St. James's *Coffee-houſe*, *May* 13.

We had this Morning Advice, That ſome *Engliſh* Merchant Ships, convoy'd by the *Briſtol* of 54 Guns, were met with by a Part of Monſ. *du Gut Trouin*'s Squadron, who engag'd the Convoy. That Ship defended it ſelf till the *Engliſh* Merchants got clear of the Enemy, but was her ſelf taken. Within few Hours after, my Lord *Durſley* came up with Part of his Squadron, and engaging the *French*, retook the *Briſtol* (which being very much ſhatter'd, ſunk), and took the *Glorieux*, a Ship of 44 Guns, as alſo a Privateer of 14. Before this Action his Lordſhip had taken Two *French* Merchant Men; and had, at the Diſpatch of theſe Advices, brought the whole ſafe to *Plymouth*.

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